

Extras

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Using regular expressions in Affinity

Affinity supports the use of regular expressions to find document content that matches specified patterns.

Regular expressions are used in several contexts in Affinity:

- On the **States** panel to toggle the visibility of layers whose names match a pattern.
- On the **Find and Replace** panel (available only in Affinity Publisher) to find document text that matches a pattern. Regular expressions are widely used across the word-processing and DTP community.
- To perform calculations in fields. See [Field input](#) and [Expressions in field input](#) for more information, including examples.

Writing regular expressions involves special syntax to specify patterns you want to find in text. Example scenarios and expressions provided below demonstrate common syntax you're likely to need to write your own expressions.

A comprehensive guide to the full power of regular expressions is beyond the scope of Affinity Help. You can learn more from online resources such as www.regular-expressions.info and regexone.com.

Case sensitivity

When an expression matches letters, the States panel is case sensitive unless you explicitly state otherwise in the expression. The Find and Replace panel is case sensitive when the **Find** box's **Match Case** formatting option is enabled.

On each panel, case sensitivity can be overridden for part or all of an expression:

- The case of specific letters in an expression can be ignored by using a character class. For example, to match the letter *a* in either case, use `[aA]` in your expression.

Character classes can also be used when matching a range of characters. For example, `[a-eA-E]` matches an individual letter from *a* to *e* regardless of its case.

- The case of all letters in an expression can be ignored by prefixing the expression with `(?i)`. For example, `(?i)internet` will match both *Internet* and *internet*.

Example regular expressions

▼ Layer names containing either of two words followed by a specific word

In an Affinity Photo document, we've used retouching tools to remove dust and blemishes from a photo by painting on layers above it.

Accordingly, each of these layers is named *Dust removal* or *Blemish removal*.

On the States panel, we can add a query that checks layer names match the regular expression `(?i)(Dust|Blemish) removal`, meaning either *Dust* or *Blemish*, followed by a space and then 'removal'. Letter case is ignored for the whole expression.

 After adding a query to the panel, use its **Hide** or **Show** button to instantly set the visibility of all layers that match the specified regular expression.

▼ Layer names containing two words in any position and order

In an Affinity Designer document, we've used the layer name *offset fill* to identify layers that have been manually repositioned to create a handmade misprinted effect.

It's possible that we've typed these words in reverse order in some places.

On the States panel, we can add a query that checks whether layer names match the regular expression `(?i)(?=.offset)(?=.fill).*`. This matches layer names that contain both words wherever each occurs in the name. Letter case is ignored for the whole expression.

▼ Layer names that follow a specific naming convention

In an Affinity Designer document for a CAD architectural design, layer names identify building components with a two-letter prefix, followed by one or more groups of an underscore followed by some digits. For example, *Ss-35_10_15*.

On the States panel, we can control the visibility of layers that belong to a particular component category by using an expression like `[Ss][Ss](_[0-9]{1,})+`. The expression will work even if the prefix's letter case has been mistyped.

Conversely, we can control the visibility of all other component categories' layers with a small change near the start of the expression, so it becomes `(^[Ss][Ss](_[0-9]{1,})+)`.

▼ Instances of a word in document text except where preceded by a specific word.

In an Affinity Publisher document, we want to find instances of a word throughout our text, but omit instances preceded by a specific word.

On the Find and Replace panel, with **Regular Expression** selected on the **Find** box's **Formatting** options, we can use the expression `(?>!proin )aliquam`. The results will include instances of *aliquam* except those preceded by *proin* and a space.

It's possible to exclude instances containing one of several preceding words. For example, to exclude instances where the word *error* is preceded by the article 'the' or 'an', use the expression `(?>!(the|an) )error`.

SEE ALSO:

[Layer states](#)

Hardware acceleration

To improve the performance of some operations, Affinity Designer can use OpenCL technology to talk directly to your system's graphics hardware.

Hardware acceleration is available for many graphics processors (GPUs), whether integrated into your computer's CPU (central processing unit), a discrete graphics card or onboard processor, or external and connected via Thunderbolt 3. Affinity Designer can make use of multiple GPUs in parallel.

It is recommended that hardware acceleration is enabled unless you experience unusual performance problems or our technical support team instructs you to disable it.

 Hardware acceleration is enabled by default. If you experience poorer performance than expected, try disabling it to see if CPU-based processing works better on your system.

Benefits

In practice, the performance boost depends on the task at hand.

Hardware acceleration is of great benefit to many raster-based tasks. Vector operations and specific features like blend ranges are performed on the CPU.

Tools, adjustments, canvas previewing and other operations will use GPU resources to achieve improved performance.

Cost

As a trade-off, memory requirements are increased and performance may be dependent on the amount of VRAM available to the GPU(s).

The VRAM requirement depends on the complexity of your workflow. Document resolution and bit depth, screen resolution, and layer complexity all contribute to it.

System requirements

Affinity support for OpenCL compute acceleration requires Windows 10.0.19042 (May 2020) or later.

It also requires GPU support for [Direct3D 12 Feature Level 12.0](#), meaning the GPU must feature AMD's GCN (Graphics Core Next), NVIDIA's Maxwell, or Intel HD Graphics 510 (Skylake) or a later microarchitecture.

▼ To enable or disable hardware acceleration:

1. Select **Edit>Settings**.
2. Select **Performance**.
3. Set **Enable OpenCL compute acceleration** as required.

The setting is inaccessible if Affinity Designer is unable to detect a compatible GPU on your system.

When enabled, compatible GPUs in use by the setting are listed under it.

SEE ALSO:

[Performance settings](#)

Using pen tablets

Using a pen tablet with your Affinity apps provides a more natural drawing experience.



Working with pen tablets

Your pen tablet is probably the most common peripheral you will use after your mouse. Tablets enhance the design experience in Affinity products, with the tablet pen (or pen stylus) providing a natural drawing experience, just like a household pen.

 Affinity does not officially support non-Wacom tablets. Please consult the original manufacturer for assistance with their tablet products.

 For optimal performance, you should ensure you have the latest drivers installed for your pen tablet. To download the latest drivers, visit your tablet provider's website or use a search engine to find drivers for your tablet.

Once the latest drivers are installed, it is a good idea to re-calibrate your tablet pen. This can be done from the **Control Panel**.

Tablet pen capabilities may vary depending on the pen you are using, with pen rotation and stylus wheel settings only supported on certain Wacom pens. For example:

- Barrel rotation is supported when using the Wacom Art Pen.
- The finger wheel is supported for Wacom Airbrush users.

For some tablet pens, using the pen's eraser (found on the opposite end of the pen) will activate the **Erase Brush Tool**.

Affinity tools and pen tablets

A number of Affinity tools and settings can be used to provide perfect precision when using a pen tablet.

When drawing with a pressure-sensitive pen tablet, the **Pen Tool**, **Vector Brush Tool** and **Pencil Tool** stroke's variable width lines will automatically match the level of pressure applied. This can be controlled by adjusting the [pressure sensitivity](#) or [pressure profile](#) settings.

When using the **Paint Brush Tool**, a number of [controller options](#) on the **Brushes** panel can also be adjusted to work alongside your tablet pen.

Tablet input settings

To adjust the quality of your pen tablet's input when working with Affinity apps, you can use one of the tablet input options.

▼ To set a preferred pen tablet input method:

1. From the **Edit** menu, select **Settings**.
2. On the **Tools** tab, under **Tablet input method**, select one of the available input methods.
 - **High Precision**—provides the best quality high-resolution input data from pen tablets that support it. This input method is not compatible with Wacom's Mouse Mode and certain makes of pen tablet.
 - **Low Precision**—provides low-resolution input data if results from using High Precision and Windows Ink are not ideal. This is enabled by default.
 - **Windows Ink**—provides similar quality to High Precision but is used for tablets which don't support High Precision. Windows Ink mode must be enabled in the tablet driver settings.

 Most modern pen tablets can use the **High Precision** input method. If you are having performance difficulties when using your tablet, changing the method to **Low Precision** may improve this.

SEE ALSO:

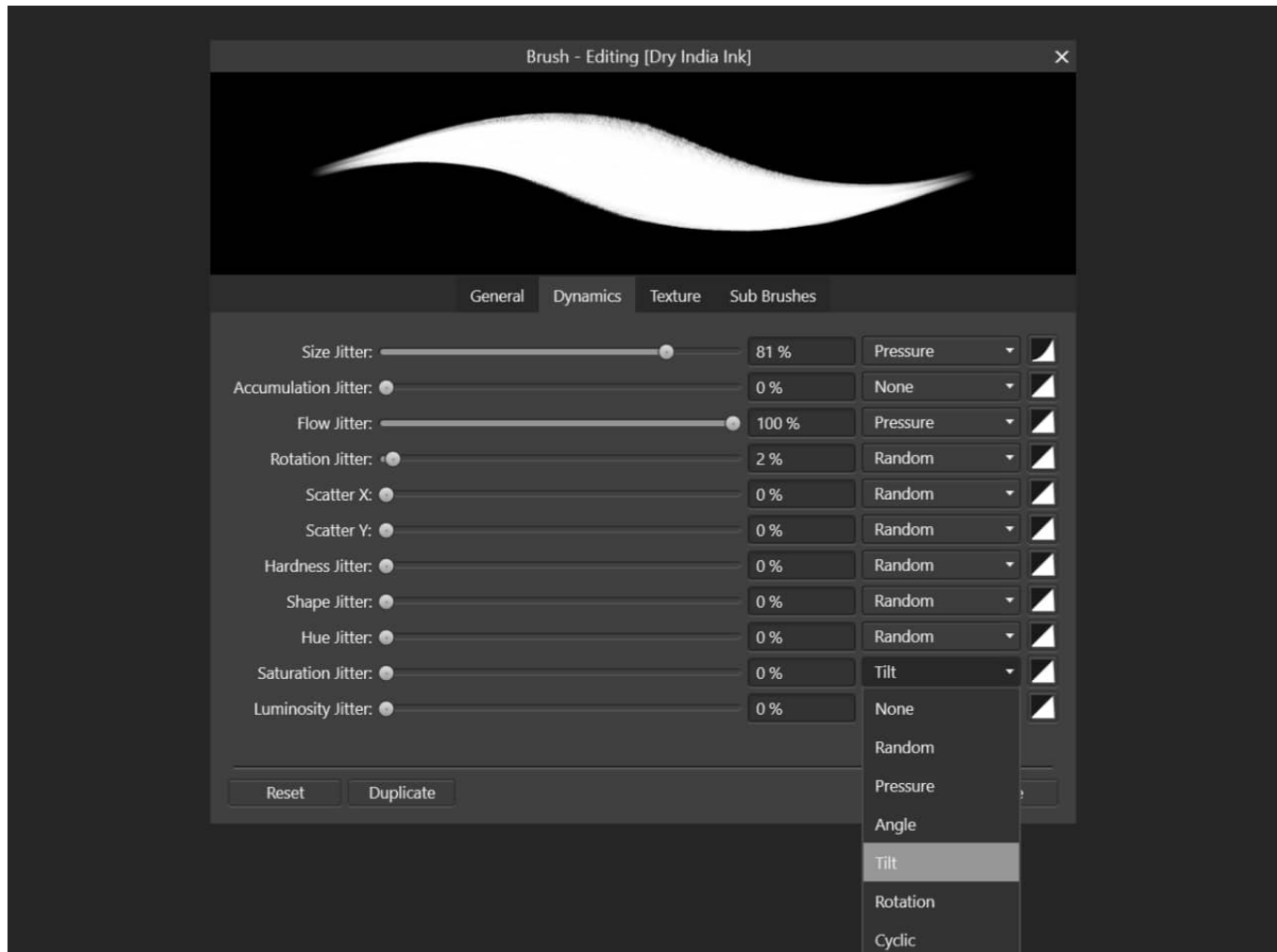
[Settings \(or Preferences\)](#)

[Pressure sensitivity](#)

[Modifying pixel brushes](#)

Using Surface Pen

You can use a Microsoft Surface Pen to interact with your Affinity app's user interface and to paint and draw using creative tools.



The pressure and tilt of Surface Pen can be used to control brush tool attributes.

Integration with your Affinity app

On compatible hardware, Surface Pen provides pressure and tilt input to your Affinity app. For example, a brush's dynamics can be configured so that pressure creates variation in brush size and tilt controls saturation.

When you turn Surface Pen around and use its eraser, your Affinity app recognizes whether the current layer contains vector or raster objects and masks out or erases the areas of contact, respectively. This happens without you having to manually perform additional steps, such as switch Persona, create a mask layer, or select the **Erase Brush Tool**.

For your Affinity app to use contact from Surface Pen but not your fingers for tool interaction, turn on **Touch for gestures only** in its **Tools** settings.

Use Surface Pen pressure and tilt input

▼ To assign Surface Pen input to brush attributes:

1. On the **Brushes** panel, select a brush.
 2. Click **Edit Brush**.
 3. Select **Dynamics**.
 4. Next to **Size Jitter**, ensure the pop-up menu is set to **Pressure**. Adjust the jitter amount and Ramp profile as required.
 5. Next to another attribute, such as **Saturation Jitter**, set the pop-up menu to **Tilt**. Adjust the attribute's jitter amount and Ramp profile as required.
-

SEE ALSO:

[Customizing the workspace](#)

[Using Surface Dial with your Affinity Windows apps](#)

Using Surface Dial

Microsoft's Surface Dial enables you to invoke Affinity menu commands and adjust tool settings by clicking and turning a rotary control.

To use it with your Affinity app, first follow [Microsoft's instructions](#) to connect it to your PC, then enable support in your Affinity app's settings: select **Tools** and tick **Enable Dial support**.

Integration with your Affinity app

After restarting the app, turning the dial while the **Move Tool** is selected will rotate the document in the view. Click the dial to reset the document's orientation.

With one of the Pixel, Erase or various other pixel-based brush tools selected, click Surface Dial to choose which attribute (brush width, accumulation, flow, and hardness) is adjusted by rotating the Dial. These tools display a large graphical overlay that provides clear feedback.



Examples of on-screen displays when controlling brush attributes (left) and selecting custom commands (right).

If a tool does not provide predefined Surface Dial gestures, you can assign choices in Windows' Settings app. Your custom commands are available from an on-screen menu, which appears when you press and hold down on the Dial.

 Some commands in your Affinity app do not have keyboard shortcuts assigned to them by default. You will need to give them shortcuts in the app's Keyboard Shortcuts preferences before configuring Surface Dial to invoke them.

Example custom commands for Surface Dial in Affinity apps

Below are examples of how you might use Surface Dial in your workflow to control brush size and layer order. The walkthroughs at the bottom of this page explain how to implement these and other personalizations.

🏠 Layer Arrange

Add or change a tool

Custom tool name

Layer Arrange

Rotate right shortcut

Ctrl

+

]

Rotate left shortcut

Ctrl

+

[

Click shortcut

Ctrl+Shift

+

[

🏠 Brush Size

Add or change a tool

Custom tool name

Brush Size

Rotate right shortcut

None

+

]

Rotate left shortcut

None

+

[

Click shortcut

Ctrl+Shift

+

B

Example custom commands for controlling layer order and vector brush size using Surface Dial.

In the left example above, rotating the Dial moves the current layer back or forward progressively in the layer stack, while clicking it sends the layer all the way to the back.

In the right example, rotating the Dial adjusts brush size (as long as the appropriate tool is selected). The **Click shortcut** toggles the Brushes Panel; normally there is no keyboard shortcut assigned to this action, so you'll need to set the same key combination in your Affinity app's settings.

Customize Surface Dial integration

▼ To assign a tool to Surface Dial's on-screen menu:

- Do one of the following:
 - Select **Settings** from the **Start menu**, select **Devices** and then select **Bluetooth & other devices**.
 - Click the Bluetooth icon in the taskbar's notification area and select **Show Bluetooth Devices**.
- On the left, select **Wheel**.

3. Under **App tools** on the right, click **Add an app**.
4. Select your Affinity app from the list.
5. Select **Add a tool**.
6. Type a custom tool name. This will be displayed in Surface Dial's on-screen menu.
7. Beneath **Rotate right shortcut**, **Rotate left shortcut**, or **Click shortcut**, set the keyboard shortcut for the Affinity tool/command you want to access using Surface Dial's on-screen menu.
8. (Optional) Repeat the previous step for the other two gestures.
9. Click **Done**.

▼ To invoke a custom Surface Dial command:

1. Click the Surface Dial.
2. Rotate the Dial so your command is highlighted.
3. Click the Dial to select the command.
4. Rotate left, rotate right or click the Dial to invoke the required command. Repeated rotation is interpreted as a repeated key press.

SEE ALSO:

[Customizing the workspace](#)

[Using Surface Pen with your Affinity Windows apps](#)

Keyboard shortcuts

To speed up your workflow, you can use shortcuts to quickly access common tools and commands using your keyboard.

Many of the shortcuts are the same as those that you use in other apps (such as **Ctrl+C** to copy). You'll find many of the shortcuts listed next to menu items (and in the list below).

For complete flexibility, you can [customize keyboard shortcuts](#) to your own way of working.

Show shortcuts for: All categories ▼

Operations shortcuts

Action	Key
Constrain the movement of an object horizontally, vertically or diagonally	Shift -drag
Select multiple objects	Shift -click
Select overlapped object	Alt -click
Cycle Selection Box	.
Set Selection Box	Ctrl .
Decrease/increase shape's/curve's stroke width by percentage	[]
Decrease/increase shape's/curve's stroke width by absolute values	Shift []
Change opacity for selected layer (or Brush tools in Pixel Persona)	numeric keys (4=40%, 43=43%, etc.)
Erase with Pixel Tool (Pixel Persona only)	Ctrl
Switch between Stroke/Fill (or Foreground/Background) color selectors (Color and Swatches panels)	X
Swap Stroke/Fill (or Foreground/Background) color selectors	Shift+X
Set Stroke/Fill (or Foreground/Background) color selectors and any vector objects that are selected to black and white, respectively	D
Set No fill on Stroke/Fill (or Foreground/Background) color selectors	/ (International and selected keyboards only)
Fill with Foreground Color (Pixel Persona only)	Alt+Backspace
Fill with Background Color (Pixel Persona only)	Ctrl+Backspace
Modify attribute listed on a panel or dialog	Drag attribute text label
Toggle Snapping	;

Action (Curve drawing)**Key**

Edit line or brush strokes as you draw/paint	Ctrl
Create cusp node (sharp corner)	Alt -drag control handle
Snap a line's control handle to 45° intervals	Shift -drag control handle
Create a straight line segment as you draw	Drag + right-click

Action (Curve editing with Node Tool)**Key**

Convert to Smooth node	Right-click
Convert to Sharp node	Alt -click
Select next node on a curve	]
Select previous node on a curve	[
Straighten a segment	Alt -click a segment
Delete a segment	Ctrl -click
Delete a node (retaining curve's geometry)	Backspace
Delete a node (for 'best-fitting' reshaped curve)	Alt-Backspace

Action (Transforming)**Key**

Move with horizontal, vertical or diagonal constraint	Shift -drag
Rotate in 15° intervals	Shift -drag rotation/corner handle
Rotate around opposite corner	Drag corner handle then hold down right mouse button
Cancel a sizing, moving, or creating operation	Esc
Resize vector objects, maintaining aspect ratio	Shift -drag from a corner handle
Resize an object from its center	Ctrl -drag from a corner handle
Mirror shearing	Ctrl -drag
Nudge ¹	arrow keys
Nudge (by modified distance) ¹	Shift -arrow keys

¹ Nudge distances are customisable via **Edit>Settings (Tools)**

Action (Warping)**Key**

Apply mesh warp	CtrlAltG
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Action (Shape Building) via numeric keypad**Key**

Add mode	+
Delete mode	-

Create mode	*
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Action (Symbols)**Key**

Create symbol	CtrlShiftK
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File shortcuts

Action**Key**

New Document	Ctrl+N
New from Clipboard	Ctrl+Alt+Shift+N
Open Document	Ctrl+O
Close Document/Close App (when no documents open)	Ctrl+W
Close All Documents	Ctrl+Alt+W
Switch Document/View	Ctrl+Tab
Save	Ctrl+S
Save As	Ctrl+Shift+S
Export	Ctrl+Alt+Shift+S
Document Setup	Ctrl+Shift+P
Print	Ctrl+P

Tools shortcuts

 For temporary tool use, hold a tool shortcut with the mouse button pressed until you've finished using it.

Action (General and Designer Persona)**Key**

Move Tool	V
Node Tool	A
Point Transform Tool	F
Contour Tool	O
Corner Tool	C
Pen Tool	P
Pencil Tool	N
Stroke Width Tool	W
Knife Tool	K
Vector Brush Tool	B
Gradient Tool	G
Transparency Tool	Y
Vector Flood Fill Tool	R

Rectangle, Ellipse, and Rounded Rectangle tools cycle	M
Shape Builder Tool	S
Artistic and Frame text tools cycle	T
Color Picker Tool	I
View Tool	H
Zoom Tool	Z

Action (Pixel Persona only)	Key
Move Tool	V
Marquee Selection Tools cycle	M
Freehand Selection Tool	L
Selection Brush Tool	W
Pixel Tool	Y
Paint Brush Tool	B
Erase Brush Tool	E
Flood Fill Tool	G
Dodge and Burn Brush Tools cycle	O
Color Picker Tool	I
View Tool	H
Zoom Tool	Z

Action (Export Persona only)	Key
Slice Tool	S
Slice Selection Tool	L

Edit shortcuts

Action	Key
Undo	Ctrl+Z
Redo	Ctrl+Shift+Z
Paste Style	Ctrl+Shift+V
Paste FX	Alt+Shift+V
Paste Inside	Ctrl+Alt+V
Paste without Format	Ctrl+Alt+Shift+V

Object control shortcuts

Action	Key
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Group	Ctrl+G
Ungroup	Ctrl+Shift+G
Duplicate	Ctrl+J
Move to Front	Ctrl+Shift+]
Move Forward One	Ctrl+]
Move to Back	Ctrl+Shift+[
Move Back One	Ctrl+[
Move Inside	Ctrl+Alt+G
Move Outside	Ctrl+Alt+Shift+G
Show All	Ctrl+Alt+Shift+H
Select All on Current Layer	Ctrl+Shift+A
Lock	Ctrl+L
Unlock	Ctrl+Shift+L
Unlock All	Ctrl+Alt+Shift+L
New Pixel Layer	Ctrl+Shift+N
Rename Layer	Ctrl+Shift+R
Convert to Curves	Ctrl+Return

Painting shortcuts

Action	Key
Picks up a new brush color	Alt -drag
Change selected layer content/brush tool's opacity	numeric keys (4=40%, 43=43%, etc.)
Decrease/increase brush width	[]
Toggle between standard brush cursor and crosshair cursor	Caps lock
Rotate brush nozzle anti-clockwise/clockwise (Pixel Persona only)	Left Right
Decrease/increase brush width with on-screen readout	Ctrl+Alt -drag (left/right)
Decrease/increase brush hardness with on-screen readout (Pixel Persona only)	Ctrl+Alt -drag (up/down)
Paint a brush stroke along a straight line	Click then Shift -click
Toggle brush properties (for width/hardness, shape/spacing or rotation, Pixel Persona only):	Ctrl+Alt +left-click
Setting brush properties on page (after setting above toggle, Pixel Persona only)	For nozzle shape: Ctrl+Alt +left-click+drag (left/right) For nozzle spacing: Ctrl+Alt +left-click+drag (up/down)

For nozzle rotation:

Ctrl+Alt+left-click+drag
(left/right)

Setting brush hardness and flow (Pixel
Persona only)

For modifying hardness:
Shift+]**Shift**+[to increase
and decrease the setting in
10% increments, respectively

For modifying flow:
Shift+numeric keys to set
percentage (press numeric
keys in quick succession to set
precise value)

Setting Strength (Smudge Brush Tool, Pixel
Persona)

numeric keys (3=30%, 33=33%,
etc.)

Ignore brush size and associated tool on the
Brushes panel

Alt+left-click

Ignore the associated tool on the Brushes
panel

Alt+Shift+left-click

Text shortcuts

Action	Key
Show Character panel	Ctrl+T
Show Typography panel	Ctrl+Shift+T
Spelling Options	Ctrl+Shift+;

Action (Navigation)	Key
Moves insertion point one character left	Left
Moves insertion point one character right	Right
Moves insertion point to start of word	Ctrl+Left
Moves insertion point to end of word	Ctrl+Right
Moves insertion point to start of line	Home
Moves insertion point to end of line	End
Moves insertion point to start of text frame	Ctrl+Home
Moves insertion point to end of text frame	Ctrl+End
Moves insertion point to start of current paragraph	Ctrl+Up
Moves insertion point to start of next paragraph	Ctrl+Down

 Add the Shift key to shortcuts that move the insertion point to also select text between the insertion point's start and end positions.

Action (Deleting)**Key**

Delete character to left of insertion point	Backspace
Delete character to right of insertion point	Delete
Delete from insertion point to start of word	Ctrl+Backspace
Delete from insertion point to end of word	Ctrl+Delete

Action (Formatting)**Key**

Bigger text	Ctrl+>
Smaller text	Ctrl+<
Precise bigger text	Ctrl+Alt+>
Precise smaller text	Ctrl+Alt+<
Bold	Ctrl+B
Italic	Ctrl+I
Underline	Ctrl+U
Superscript	Ctrl+Shift+=
Subscript	Ctrl+Alt+-
Align Left	Ctrl+Alt+L
Align Center	Ctrl+Alt+C
Align Right	Ctrl+Alt+R
Justify Left	Ctrl+Alt+

Action (Typography)**Key**

Tighten (Spacing, 10‰ decrement)	Alt+Left
Loosen (Spacing, 10‰ increment)	Alt+Right
Tighten More (Spacing, 50‰ decrement)	Alt+Shift+Left
Loosen More (Spacing, 50‰ increment)	Alt+Shift+Right
Raise Baseline	Alt+Shift+Up
Lower Baseline	Alt+Shift+Down
Precise Raise Baseline	Ctrl+Alt+Shift+Up
Precise Lower Baseline	Ctrl+Alt+Shift+Down
Increase Paragraph Leading	Alt+Down
Decrease Paragraph Leading	Alt+Up
Precise Increase Paragraph Leading	Ctrl+Alt+Down
Precise Decrease Paragraph Leading	Ctrl+Alt+Up

Action (Special characters)**Key**

Line Break	Shift+Return
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Non-Breaking Space	Alt+Spacebar
Soft Hyphen	Ctrl+Shift+-
Non-Breaking Hyphen	Ctrl+Alt+-
En Dash	Alt+-
Em Dash	Alt+Shift+-
Toggle Unicode	Alt+U

View shortcuts

Action	Key
Rotate document view (about cursor)	Alt while using a mouse scroll wheel
Rotate document view (about center)	Shift+Alt while using a mouse scroll wheel
Increase document view rotation speed	Ctrl while rotating the document view
Reset document view rotation	Ctrl+Alt+Shift+R
Zoom In	Ctrl+=
Zoom Out	Ctrl+-
Zoom to Fit	Ctrl+0 (or double-click View Tool icon)
Zoom to Width	Alt+Shift+0 (or double-click View Tool icon)
Zoom to Selection	Ctrl+Alt+0 (or double-click Layers panel thumbnail)
(Zoom to) 100%	Ctrl+1 (or double-click Zoom Tool icon)
(Zoom to) 200%	Ctrl+2
(Zoom to) 400%	Ctrl+3
(Zoom to) 800%	Ctrl+4
(Zoom to) Actual Size	Ctrl+8
(Zoom to) Pixel Size	Ctrl+9
Hot key zoom	Spacebar+Ctrl -drag
Hot key zoom in	Spacebar+Ctrl -click
Hot key zoom out	Spacebar+Alt -click
Hot key zoom in marquee	Spacebar+Alt -drag
Hot key panning	Spacebar
Scroll vertically up/down	Mouse scroll wheel
Scroll horizontally left/right	Shift+Mouse scroll wheel
Show Rulers	Ctrl+R
Show Guides	Ctrl+;
Show Grid	Ctrl+'

Grid Plane cycle	,
Pixel view mode	Ctrl+Alt+Y
Pixel (Retina) view mode	Ctrl+Alt+Shift+Y
Last used wireframe mode (Outline or X-ray) toggle	CtrlY
Toggle Split View	,
Switch to Next View	,
Clip to Canvas	\
Isolate an object	Alt -click Layers panel thumbnail

Selection shortcuts

Action	Key
Select All	Ctrl+A
Deselect	Ctrl+D
Invert Pixel Selection	Ctrl+Shift+I
Select Next	Ctrl+Alt+]
Select Previous	Ctrl+Alt+[
Select Parent	Ctrl+Up
Nudge selection ¹	Arrow key
Modified nudge selection ¹	Shift+arrow key
Selection from layer	Ctrl -click Layers panel thumbnail
Selection from layer luminosity	Ctrl+Shift -click Layers panel thumbnail
Add to/remove from object selection (by clicking object)	Shift -click (Move Tool)
Add to/remove from object selection (when selection marquee wholly encompasses object)	Shift -drag (Move Tool)
Add to object selection (when selection marquee partially intersects object)	Drag with left mouse button, then hold down right mouse button (Move Tool)
Add to pixel selection	Ctrl+Alt -drag (Marquee and Freehand Selection tools)
Remove from pixel selection	Alt -drag (Marquee and Freehand Selection tools)

¹ Nudge distances are customizable via **Edit>Settings (Tools)**

Workspace shortcuts

Action	Key
Show/Hide Studio	Ctrl+Shift+H
Show/Hide Toolbar	Ctrl+Alt+T
Toggle UI	Tab

Blend mode shortcuts

Action	Key
Next Blend Mode	Shift+=
Previous Blend Mode	Shift+-
Normal	Alt+Shift+N
Darken	Alt+Shift+K
Multiply	Alt+Shift+M
Color Burn	Alt+Shift+B
Linear Burn	Alt+Shift+A
Lighten	Alt+Shift+G
Screen	Alt+Shift+S
Color Dodge	Alt+Shift+D
Add	Alt+Shift+W
Overlay	Alt+Shift+O
Soft Light	Alt+Shift+F
Hard Light	Alt+Shift+H
Vivid Light	Alt+Shift+V
Linear Light	Alt+Shift+J
Pin Light	Alt+Shift+Z
Hard Mix	Alt+Shift+L
Difference	Alt+Shift+E
Exclusion	Alt+Shift+X
Hue	Alt+Shift+U
Saturation	Alt+Shift+T
Color	Alt+Shift+C
Luminosity	Alt+Shift+Y

Other blend modes do not have keyboard shortcuts by default but can be assigned them, if required.

Misc shortcuts

Action	Key
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Settings (or Preferences)	Ctrl+,
Curves (Adjustment)	Ctrl+M
Black and White (Adjustment)	Ctrl+Alt+Shift+B

SEE ALSO:

[Customizing keyboard shortcuts](#)

Settings

Settings comprise a series of miscellaneous options that are applied across your app. They can be used to set up your own way of working.

Show settings for: All categories ▼

General options

Name	Description
Reopen document on startup	Choose whether to restore the last session when launching app.
Limit initial zoom to a maximum of 100%	Choose whether to limit initial zoom to a maximum of 100% when loading files.
Documents open in a new floating window	Choose whether documents open in a floating window separate from the app's main window.
Documents open in the current active group	Choose whether documents open in the current active group, meaning the most recent floating window, or in the app's main window.
Automatically update linked resources when modified externally	Choose whether to automatically link newly created or imported content categories to all Affinity 2 apps on your device.
Save thumbnails with documents	You can exclude your thumbnail from being stored with your document.
Enable "Save" over imported PSD files	Choose whether to overwrite imported PSD files when using the Save command, rather than creating an *.afdesign file. We recommend reading the warning provided in the dialog before selecting this option.
Normalize breaks on copy plain text	Choose whether your pasted plain text retains breaks' consistency prior to further formatting.
Insert filler text as text	Choose whether to insert filler text as editable text.
Import PSD text as text rather than bitmap	Choose to open PSDs with editable text objects.

Name	Description
Copy items as SVG	Choose whether to create SVGs on the clipboard when copying objects for better cross-platform interaction.
Prefer to keep selection after delete	Choose whether to keep selection after deleting an object. The object below the deleted object will be selected.
Prefer metafile to raster when pasting from external application	Choose whether to prefer metafile to raster when pasting from external app.
Load metadata from XMP sidecars	Choose whether to import metadata from an XMP sidecar file automatically when opening the corresponding image, provided they have the same base filename and the sidecar file has the .xmp file extension (in lower case).
Refine HEIC depth maps	Choose whether to automatically refine HEIC depth maps.
Import PSD smart objects where possible	Choose whether to allow Affinity to import smart objects; by default, Affinity Designer converts Smart Objects in Photoshop documents to pixel layers. Note that smart objects that are linked, meaning their content comes from an external file, are not converted to embedded documents.
Only return safe results for stock image searches	Choose whether to apply a safe-search filter while searching for stock images.
Link new content categories	Choose whether newly created content categories are linked, and thus recognized by Affinity apps, on the same device.
Enable file sharing on the local area network	Choose whether file sharing is available on LAN. Additionally, opt for sharing via the Same Affinity account only, if preferred.
Send anonymous usage information	Send anonymous usage information collects Analytics data related to your computer OS, hardware and app usage for continual product improvement. This data is used for statistical analysis. Absolutely no personal information, as covered by data protection rules, is

Name	Description
	contained in the data collected.
Open Affinity Fonts Folder in Finder/Explorer	You can open your app's fonts folder, from which Affinity Font (.affont) files (previously installed by dragging onto the app) can be removed to uninstall them. (Affinity Fonts installed via the Account feature can be uninstalled using that feature.)
Language	Sets the UI language independently of the operating system. Select from the pop-up menu.

Color options

Name	Description
Color Profile	You can set up your default RGB, 32bit RGB, CMYK, Grayscale and LAB color profiles for use in future documents. Select from the pop-up menus.
Rendering Intent	Rendering Intent —choose the rendering intent for your images. Select from the pop-up menu.
Black point compensation	Choose whether to apply black point compensation when opening an image.
Convert opened files to working space (and warn)	Choose whether to convert an opened file's color space to the working space and also choose whether to warn that this has occurred.
Warn when assigning working profile to unprofiled files	Choose whether to receive a warning when a working profile is assigned to an unprofiled image.
Enable EDR by default in 32bit RGB views	Choose whether to allow for the extended dynamic range images to be displayed in 32bit RGB mode.
OpenColorIO Configuration File: Select	Select a OpenColorIO Configuration File.
Perform OCIO conversions based on filename (and warn when converting on load)	Choose whether OCIO conversions are based on file name and also choose whether to warn that this has occurred.
Associate OpenEXR alpha channels	Choose whether to merge EXR alpha channel information to

Name	Description
	its associated RGB pixel layer's alpha channel.
Post divide EXR colors by alpha	Choose whether to divide EXR color channels by the alpha channel.
Perturb zero EXR alpha	Choose whether to leave zero alpha information untouched, or, with Post divide EXR colors by alpha enabled as well, for zero alpha information to be altered so post-division with color channel information can be achieved.

Performance options

Name	Description
RAM Usage Limit	RAM Usage Limit —allows you to set your preference for optimizing app performance for your projects.
Disk Usage Warning At	Disk Usage Warning At —choose the limit at which you are warned about disk usage.
Undo Limit	Undo Limit —choose the history length you are able to access.
View Quality	View Quality —choose the way in which the image displays during modifications. Select from the pop-up menu.
Dither gradients	Choose whether to dither gradients, when working on projects, to speed up performance.
Use precise clipping	Choose a clipping option for optimizing performance.
File Recovery Interval	File Recovery Interval —sets the interval for saving temporary data for currently open documents, allowing a document restore to be offered at startup if the app develops a fault.
Renderer	Renderer—choose your rendering experience. Select from the pop-up menu. Default—renders using the default method - typically the installed graphics card. Graphics display adapter—the name here varies depending on your graphics

Name	Description
	card and its driver. If you have multiple graphics cards installed you may see more than one option here. WARP —use Windows Advanced Rasterization Platform just for presenting the document. Try this if you are experiencing performance issues with the default option.
Retina Rendering	Choose your rendering experience. Select from the pop-up menu. Automatic (Best) —renders as non-retina followed by retina for balanced performance and quality. Low quality (Fastest) —renders as non-retina only for highest performance level but compromises on quality. High quality (Slowest) —renders as retina only for high quality but may compromise performance.
Hardware Acceleration	Checking Enable OpenCL compute acceleration boosts some tasks' performance if a compatible GPU is available. See the Hardware acceleration topic.

User interface options

Name	Description
Background Grey Level	Controls the grayscale level of the pasteboard surrounding the document.
Artboard Background Grey Level	Controls the grayscale level of the pasteboard surrounding artboard(s).
Text Contrast	Adjusts the luminance of text in the user interface.
UI Brightness	Adjusts the luminance of window backgrounds in the user interface.
UI Contrast	Instantly sets Text Contrast and UI Brightness for high contrast between text and window backgrounds, or to their default values.
UI Style	Displays the user interface in a dark or light style.
Icon Style: Color/Mono	Makes icons display in color/grayscale

Name	Description
	(monochromatic iconography), respectively.
Tooltip Delay	Set the length of time before a tooltip appears when hovering over a UI element.
Decimal Places for Unit Types	Controls the number of decimal places allowable for each document measurement unit and degree readouts.
Automatically lock background layer on import	Locks (or keeps unlocked) an imported image as a background layer.
Show Lines in points	Choose whether line width (thickness) displays in points or in the document's measurement units.
Show Text in points	Choose whether text is expressed in points or in the document's measurement units.
Show brush previews	Choose whether the brush cursor display a preview of pixels to be placed. When enabled, a circular preview of the current brush's nozzle is displayed; disable the option to hide the nozzle preview if the preview obscures existing page content. When Force pressure on the brush tool's context toolbar is enabled, previews are automatically disabled.
Always show brush crosshair	Overlays a cross-hair over the brush cursor for better targeting.
Always use white background for font dropdown	Choose whether to preview fonts on a white (default) or black background in the font selection dropdown list.
Enable Pointer Support	Choose whether to enable pointer support. Enabling this option requires app restart.
Ask for name when creating Layers and Groups	Choose whether you would like to be prompted to name a new layer, group or warp group upon creation.

Tools options

Name	Description
Tool Handle Size	Makes selected layer content's bounding box handles and

Name	Description
	curve nodes (and handles) smaller or larger.
\-click show context menu	Choose whether Right -click displays context menus.
Select object when intersects with selection marquee	Choose whether an object is added to a selection when partially covered by the selection marquee or whether it has to be encompassed by the marquee.
Use Shift key to cycle tool groups	When enabled, cycling between tool groups is only possible with modifier pressed.Shift
Use mouse wheel to zoom	Choose whether the middle mouse button will allow scrolling or zooming.
Use 'scrubby' zoom	Choose whether dragging with the Zoom Tool zooms around the cursor (scrubby zoom) or creates a 'zoom to' marquee.
Enable Dial support	Check the option to use Surface Studio's Surface Dial (or equivalent radial device).
Enable canvas rotation with Alt +scroll wheel	Choose if the canvas can be rotated using a scroll wheel or not.
Touch for gestures only	When enabled, only your connected tablet pen can use tools on the canvas but you can still use gestures. Useful for preventing accidental tool use when interacting with the canvas. When disabled, you have full touch control plus gestures, with or without a tablet pen.
Move Tool Aspect Constrain	Controls the default constraining behavior when resizing objects using the Move Tool. Select from the pop-up menu.
Tablet input method	Choose whether your tablet pen should use the best quality high resolution input data (if supported), low resolution input data (the system cursor position—this setting is switched on by default), or enable Windows Ink in your drivers.
Create Text with Blend Gamma	Controls the default blend gamma applied to text on creation.

Name	Description
Nudge Distance	Sets the nudge amount by which an object is moved when using the arrow keys. Select measurement units from the pop-up menu.
Modifier Nudge Distance	Sets the amount by which an object is moved when using the arrow keys along with the Shift key.
Synchronize tools between documents	Makes tool settings persistent between different documents.
Additional dictionary folder	Add an additional folder that you can copy dictionary files into. The directory is scanned during start-up and found dictionaries will be added.

Shortcuts options

Name	Description
Shortcuts	Use these options to define your own keyboard shortcuts. See the Customizing keyboard shortcuts topic.

Assistant options

When you perform certain operations—for example, pixel painting (or erasing) on vector layers, or applying adjustments to selections—the Assistant will take action according to your preferences and display an alert message to make you aware.

Use these options to control overall Assistant behavior:

Name	Description
Enable assistant	When checked, the Assistant will perform your chosen action for any operation it can help with. When unchecked, the Assistant does not perform any actions.
Automatically undo and redo assistant actions	When checked, any action that has been recorded as multiple consecutive history states is treated like one state by the Undo and Redo commands. When unchecked, the commands need to be selected multiple times to

Name	Description
	undo/redo multi-state Assistant actions.
Alert when assistant takes an action	When checked, the Assistant will display an alert message whenever it takes action. When unchecked, alert messages are not displayed.

Use these options to specify the required action for various operations and tool behaviors:

Name	Description
Painting with no layer selected	In Pixel Persona, you can choose to create a new pixel layer for your brush strokes using 'Add new pixel layer and paint'; 'Take no action' means that no pixel painting is allowed. If a vector layer is selected, a new pixel layer is created above the vector layer. If a pixel layer is selected, your brush stroke is added to the pixel layer.
Erasing from vector layers	In Pixel Persona, this option lets you choose to erase on a created pixel mask over your vector object, immediately rasterize the vector layer and erase directly on it, or take no action.
Other brushes on vector layers	For retouching pixel brushes (e.g., Burn Brush Tool, Smudge Brush Tool, etc.), any applied brush stroke rasterizes the vector layer by default. You can change this behavior by selecting 'Take no action', which doesn't convert the layer or apply the stroke.
Brush tool sharing	Choose whether a selected brush and context toolbar settings are shared between tools of a similar nature (e.g. Dodge, Burn and Sponge Brush Tools), shared across all tools, or each tool's brush is set independently.
Applying filters to vector layers	When a filter is added to a vector layer, the Assistant can either rasterize the vector layer and apply the filter to it, or take no action.

Name	Description
Adding adjustment layer to selection	In Pixel Persona, if you've created a selection, any adjustment applied to the selection can be added as a new adjustment layer or made a child adjustment layer in the current layer.
Adding mask layer to selection	Analogous to 'Adding adjustment layer to selection' above, but for mask layers.

Linked Services options

Name	Description
Linked Services	Use these options if you use multiple personal devices to edit documents that contain linked resources from cloud storage. See the Linked Services topic.

Content Sync

Name	Description
Content Sync	Use these options to control and manage your Affinity account purchases.

Name	Description
Check for updates	Sets the frequency to which the app will check for any software updates. You can switch off update checking by selecting 'Never'.

Miscellaneous options

Name	Description
Reset	Your current Fills, Brushes, Object Styles, Text Styles and User Defaults can be reset to factory defaults.

▼ To configure settings:

- From the Affinity app menu, select **Settings**.

 To navigate to particular preference options, use the arrow keys, pop-up menu or search facility at the top of the dialog.

SEE ALSO:

[Object defaults](#)

[Color management](#)

[Customizing keyboard shortcuts](#)

[Using pen tablets](#)

Import and export file formats

Affinity Designer is capable of opening many raster and vector file formats directly. Designer also imports PDF and Adobe PSD files, and exports a range of raster file formats and the PSD file format.

File type	Open/Import	Export
Affinity template		✓
Adobe Illustrator (AI)	✓ ¹	
Adobe Freehand (10 and MX)	✓ ²	
Adobe PhotoShop (PSD)	✓	✓ ⁸
BMP	✓	
DWG/DXF	✓ ^{10,13}	✓ ^{11,13}
EPS	✓	✓
GIF	✓	✓
HEIF/HEIC/HIF	✓ ³	
JPEG	✓	✓
J2K,JP2	✓	
JPEG-XR/JXR (WDP/HDP)	✓ ⁹	
JPEG-XL	✓	✓
PDF	✓ ^{1,7}	✓ ⁸
PNG	✓ ¹²	✓ ^{4,12}
RAW	✓ ⁵	
SVG	✓	✓
TGA	✓ ⁴	✓
TIFF	✓ ⁶	✓ ⁴
WEBP	✓	✓
OpenEXR	✓	✓
Radiance HDR	✓	✓

¹ Multi-page files can be imported, with each page being placed on its own artboard.

² Multi-page Freehand files open with each page concatenated onto a single page. Add file extension .fh10 or .fh11 in Finder to import. Text import is not supported.

³ For iPhone images, the HEIC file may include an upsampled depth map, loaded as an editable second layer. For Canon EOS models (1 DX MkIII, R5 and R6), HIF files (HDR 10-bit PQ-encoded) can be opened.

⁴ Supports transparency.

⁵ For a comprehensive up-to-date list of RAW file support, please see the following links:

- [SerifLabs RAW](#) (Mac & Windows)
- [Apple Core Image RAW](#) (Mac only)

⁶ 12 bit TIFF (RGB or Mono) included, plus legacy TIFF files exported from Photoshop with CICC data embedded in an ICC profile.

⁷ JBIG2 PDF encoding is supported.

⁸ Text will be rasterized on export.

⁹ Includes JPEG-XR 101010 (e.g. XBOX screen captures).

¹⁰ DWG (R12-R14, 2000-2018) and DXF (R9-R14, 2000-2018).

¹¹ DWG/DXF 2000-2002, 2004-2006, 2007-2009, 2010-2012, 2013-2016 and 2018+.

¹² Includes 32-bit HDR support ([PNG specification - Third edition](#)) for interchanging HDR broadcast imagery in a lossless format. Legacy PNG files exported from Photoshop with CICC data embedded in an ICC profile can be imported.

¹³ It is not recommended that you use Affinity's ability to import and export DWG/DXF files to collaboratively edit such files in both Affinity and CAD software.

SEE ALSO:

[Open documents](#)

[Importing PDF documents](#)

[Importing Adobe documents](#)

[Importing CAD documents](#)

[Placing content](#)

[Export](#)

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